



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 8, 2024

### Minutes

President's Boardroom, Horace Mann Center

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Ali Salehi, Vice Chair Melissa Alvarado, Secretary Dr. Gloria Williams, and Trustees, Daniel Currier, George Gilmer, Madeline Landrau, Dr. Robert Martin, Chris Montemayor, and William Reichelt

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Paul Boudreau and Theresa Jasmin

Also present and participating were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson, and cabinet members Dr. David Caruso, Dr. Michael Freeman, Dr. Kevin Hearn, Richard Lenfest, Jr., Lisa McMahon, Dr. LaRue Pierce, Timothy Rooke, and Stephen Taksar.

Chair Salehi called the meeting to order at 3.00 PM and announced the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Landrau seconded by Trustee Gilmer, to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2023 meeting. There being no discussion, **motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Montemayor, seconded by Trustee Alvarado, to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2023 meeting. There being no discussion, **motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Currier, seconded by Trustee Landrau, to approve the minutes of the December 22, 2023 meeting. There being no discussion, **motion passed unanimously.**

Chair Salehi welcomed the Board of Trustees' new assistant, Brittney Kraus. He thanked Dr. Caruso for his hard work as temporary Provost as the University is actively seeking a new academic Provost. The Chair made notification that the Governance and Nomination and JEDI Committees will not be presenting today.

President's Report. Dr. Linda Thompson announced that the University brought back the "State of University Address" which can be viewed on the Office of the President's website.

The President spoke about Westfield State University's future and the shared strategic plan to inform and direct the University's decisions and actions. This is being accomplished with visioning sessions, focus groups surveys and utilizing the Strategic Planning Committee. This committee involves Strategy Management Consulting. She reported there were four items for consideration and guidance,

1. WSU must be a destination for high achieving people.

- Division of Academic Affairs reorganizing the Graduate and Continuing Education Programs.
- 2. Must be an organization that values equity, diversity, and inclusion.
  - Urban Education Program will be renamed Lead Scholars Program
- 3. Must be an organization that acts locally and thinks globally.
  - Mary Lou McDonald featured speaker at the 2024 undergraduate commencement ceremony.
- 4. Must be an organization that is financially sustainable.
  - Fall Open House visits up 46 %
  - Admissions has reviewed 500 more applications than last year.
  - Retention strategy
    - Maintaining buildings, grounds and technology infrastructure directly contributes to recruitment and retention of students and employees.
    - A five-year allocation of 9.2 million is currently underway. Those efforts will be discussed at a later time.

This year we are celebrating our 185th anniversary,

- Theme: Infinite Possibilities.
- Four Signature Events
  1. Keeper of the Dream; Thursday February 22, 2024
  2. In March there will be public lectures on “women’s health & stressors experienced being super women.”
  3. In May there will be fundraising honoring the commencement speaker.
  4. In October for Homecoming, The Blue Diamond Ball will be held at MGM Springfield.

Student Trustee Report. Trustee Daniel Currier stated that the University welcomed new transfer and first year students at the start of the spring semester. New students have been involved in a wide variety of activities and thanked the coordinator of new student orientation for the oversight of these activities. He also wanted to thank the Westfield State community for their efforts to host a wide range of Black History Month events. He discussed Accepted Students Days and future events that had not been held in 5 years. He shared athletics and academics achievements. Trustee Currier spoke about SGA’s (Student Government Association) quest to submit an updated common hour policy. An update for the student trustee projects included student employment centralization that is up and running and all forms involving intramural activities are digitized.

Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Committee. Committee Chair William Reichelt updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting.

Advancement, Marketing, and External Relations Committee. Committee Chair Dr. Gloria Williams updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting.

Academic Affairs Committee. Committee Chair Dr. Robert Martin updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting and presented the following Motions approved by the committee.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Martin, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to grant the Honorary Degree to Mary Lou McDonald. There being no discussion or abstentions, **motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Martin, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, the granting of a Master in Arts in History. There being no discussion, **motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Affairs and Advancement Committee. Committee Chair George Gilmer updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting and presented the following Motions approved by the committee.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Gilmer, seconded by Trustee Landrau, to approve the revised Allocation/Reallocation of Space Policy (0250) and supporting Procedures, as presented, based on best practices. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Gilmer seconded by Trustee Landrau, to approve two new capital projects as presented and required by the Trust Fund Management Policy (0604). The projects are funded by the Fair Share Program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts \$50,000,000 capital allocation. The total allocation for Westfield State is \$1,292,058. Further, if the projects are not completed by June 30, 2024, the unspent funds will be rolled forward into the FY25 budget to complete the projects. There being no (further) discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Gilmer, seconded by Trustee Reichelt to approve the FY25 annual tuition and fee schedules, as presented. There being no (further) discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

The motion to accept the newly revised investment Policy (0430), was not voted on during this session.

Audit Committee. Committee Vice Chair William Reichelt updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting and presented the following Motions approved by the committee.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Landrau, to accept the audit report on the audit procedures required pursuant to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, as prepared by the firm of WithumSmith and Brown P.C., and to authorize the submission of this report to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse and to other parties as required by OMB Uniform Guidance and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. There being no discussion.

**Trustee Currier abstained; the motion passed.**

Other Business. Chair Salehi and Vice Chair Alvarado are working on crisis management and should have a report for April's full board meeting. President Thomson is also working on KPI's (Key Performance Indicator) regarding crisis management for each division. They are also trying to set goals for the investments the trustees have approved.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Williams, seconded by Trustee Montemayor, to ratify the actions of the Executive Committee on December 22, 2023 to authorize the administration to transfer \$10-\$15 million to a new account with Corient after evaluating the University's current cash and money market accounts. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

There being no further business,

**MOTION** made by Trustee Alvarado, and seconded by Trustee Landrau, to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM.

**Attachments:**

- a. Draft Minutes of September 8, 2023 Executive Committee
- b. Draft Minutes of December 13, 2023
- c. Draft Minutes of December 22, 2023 Executive Committee
- d. President's Presentation
- e. Student Trustee Presentation

**Academic Affairs Committee:**

- f. Motion – Honorary Degree approval for Mary Ann McDonald
- g. Motion- Approval of a Master of Arts in History

**Financial Affairs Committee:**

- h. Motion – Allocation/Reallocation of Space policy (0250)
- i. Motion – Capital Planning and New Projects
- j. Motion – FY25 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees
- k. Motion – Investment Policy (0430)

**Audit Committee:**

- l. Motion – Uniform Guidance Report

**Full Board:**

- m. Motion – Ratification of Motion-Funds Transfer to New Account

**Secretary's Certificate**

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees meeting held on February 8, 2024.

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Dr. Gloria Williams, Secretary

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Date